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## IDEA 2004::

### **Administrator's Role of Vision and Leadership Remains Unchanged**

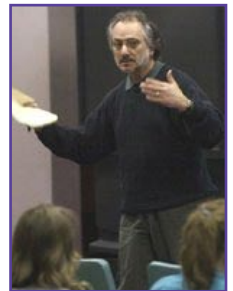
*by Tom Mihail, Ph.D., Chair, Special Education/Elementary Education  
Graduate Studies/School of Education, Purdue University Calumet*

**T**he findings of a 1975 Congressional study on the state of special education shocked the members of the House and Senate: (1) at least a million children with disabilities were denied access to public education; (2) another million went unserved because their disabilities were undetected; (3) over half of the students eligible for "special" education were not receiving appropriate services; (4) parents had to find, transport their children to, and pay for nonpublic programs; and (5) a disproportionate number of minority students were diagnosed as mentally retarded, learning disabled, emotionally disturbed, and behavior disordered.

The legislative response to this injustice came in record time and with unprecedented bipartisanship. Congress passed the most sweeping legislation in the history of US education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) has literally changed the landscape of American education. Virtual apartheid in service delivery existed 30 years ago; today 77.54% of students with disabilities spend all or part of their school day in general education settings. Over 96% attend their local neighborhood schools.

IDEA is, above all, civil rights legislation. In that context, the role of administrators has not changed with the 2004 passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, the law's third reauthorization/revision. Administrative vision, leadership, and advocacy to protect the rights of students with special needs, their families, and their service providers are the charges of school principals.

Nor have the basic provisions of the law changed: zero reject; nondiscriminatory evaluation; individualized educational programs; placement in the most appropriate, least restrictive environment; due process; and parental involvement in decision-making.



*Dr. Tom Mihail*

*(continued on page 7)*



*Phyllis Usher*

## Welcome Back!

**P**rin cipals, as you turn the page to a new school year I implore you to take the time to clarify your thinking and build your own inner resources. A personal code—a "this I know"—can be your blueprint for survival. While it is imperative that you craft your own creed, you may benefit by reading another's.

- I know that my responsibilities lie in the here and now but that changes, innovations and foresight are important. Therefore, I will plan and educate myself for now and for the future.

*(continued on page 7)*



**AVERAGE Is Just Not Good Enough**

January 23-24, 2006

**16<sup>th</sup> Annual  
IPLA Winter  
Conference**

**Don't Wait! Seats are Filling Quickly!**

**WINTER CONFERENCE**

**AVERAGE**  
Is Just Not Good Enough



When famed high school basketball coach Ken Carter literally locked his undefeated, state play-off bound team out of the gym and forced them to hit the books and stop counting on athletic potential as the only ticket out of a tough, inner city life, he sent a powerful message. At the podium, Coach Carter scores with hard-hitting advice about accountability, integrity, teamwork and leadership to succeed both on and off the basketball court.

#### **Winter Conference Breakout Presenters Needed**

As in the past we will offer 30 breakout sessions at the 16th Annual Winter Conference, where average is just not good enough is the focus. At this time we are looking for current practitioners who are interested in presenting. If chosen by the Winter Conference Planning Committee, presenters will receive free admission to the two-day conference, a \$175.00 value. We are looking for teachers, principals, central offices personnel, etc... who can offer valuable information to varying audiences. Applications to become a presenter can be found under the Winter Conference logo on the IPLA home page at [www.doe.state.in.us/ipla](http://www.doe.state.in.us/ipla). **The deadline for applications is October 1, 2004.** This is a great opportunity to share your knowledge and represent your school district to an audience of over 500 educators.

Please visit the IPLA website at [www.doe.state.in.us/ipla](http://www.doe.state.in.us/ipla)

to view the agenda and conference details.

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**WINTER CONFERENCE**

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**Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel & Suites**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana**  
**(888) 627-7814**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ IPLA Group Number \_\_\_\_\_  
(if applicable)

First Name for Name Tag \_\_\_\_\_

Position: ☐ Principal ☐ Teacher ☐ Superintendent ☐ Other  
(check one)

School Name \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Corp/Organization Name \_\_\_\_\_

Corporation Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Participant Registration**

Regular Registration

**\$175**

This covers the cost of registration,  
a continental breakfast on Day 1,  
and a buffet breakfast on Day 2.

Total Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

**CRU Request**

If you are interested in receiving 8 CRUs  
for this conference please provide  
your Social Security Number below.

\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Please check method  
of payment.

☐ Check # \_\_\_\_\_

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Make checks payable to:  
IPLA Alumni Association

**Registration Deadline is January 20, 2006**

**No Refunds After January 22, 2006**

Please indicate that you are a participant at the IPLA Winter Conference  
to receive block room rates at the Sheraton.

**Hotel reservations must be made by January 6, 2006**

Mail registration form to:

**Krista Orton - IPLA - Room 229, State House - Indianapolis, IN 46204**  
Telephone: (317) 232-9004 Fax: (317) 232-9005





## A Wise Young Man

*Cathy Southerland, Family / Community Liaison  
M.S.D. Lawrence Centralized Kindergarten South*

When asked what advice he would give to teachers and principals, these profound words were uttered by 18 year-old Dionne Chambers—"Just care." This simple message was from a wise young man. Dionne recently graduated from Arlington High School, which is in Indianapolis Public Schools. This is where Dionne spent his entire educational journey as a special education student.

Dionne's memories of elementary school do not differ from those of almost any recent high school graduate. "I had fun and lots of friends," he remembers. He was placed in general education classrooms but did receive extra help on tests. He does not remember being pulled out to receive services outside the classroom. In middle school it was determined that Dionne had a MiMD (mild mental disability). From sixth grade through high school, he was taught in special education classrooms containing only six or seven students. He joined the general education students only for special area classes. He received assistance daily after school (which he always requested) and in the summer. When he reached the age of fifteen, he attended his own case conferences where he appreciated the opportunity to give input into his own educational program.

Dionne admits that he sometimes "went off" in school when he was frustrated because he couldn't understand what was being taught. "Teachers need to slow down and go deeper with what they are trying to teach. They need to make sure that all students are catching on. They should especially stop and ask the Special Ed students." He went on to say that he liked most of his teachers but didn't like ones that were "loud with an attitude." Math was his strong subject at Arlington; and Dionne wishes that had could have been put in "regular" math classes, but conflicts in scheduling prevented this from happening. Dionne regrets that he did not know any of his school principals well but smiles proudly as he says this is because he was never in trouble. He believes that a school principal should speak to all students and try to develop a relationship with them.



*Cathy Southerland (left), Dionne Chambers (Center), Chris Barnett (Right)*

Dionne never lacked for friends in school. He never felt different and was accepted by everyone; however, he admits that most of his friends in high school were also in his special education classes. Some of the "regular" kids told him that they wished they were in the special education classes because of the small class size. However, he noticed that a few were nervous and laughed at students in the special education classes. "They thought that we didn't know what we were doing." Dionne proceeded to tell these students that they were no different from them—that they were doing the same thing—just a little slower. "We even did some stuff that they couldn't!"

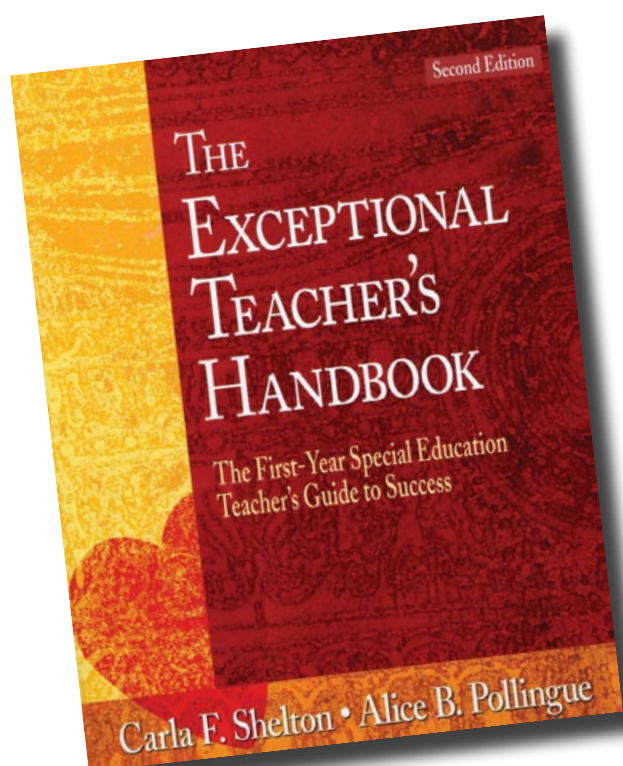
In the fall, Dionne plans to study education at Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana. The field of education will be better for having this young man involved. He sums up his feelings—"It's all right to be a special needs student because we can be just as successful as everyone else." Indeed, Dionne Chambers is and will continue to be.



## BOOKS FOR LEADERS

### The Exceptional Teacher's Handbook, Second Edition

Carla F. Shelton and Alice B. Pollingue



Your first year as a special educator can be one of the most challenging, from classroom management and instructional planning, to IEP meetings, parent conferences, educational assessments, transitioning, and even the emotional toll the job can take. Shelton and Pollingue have helped thousands of new and experienced special education teachers with *The Exceptional Teacher's Handbook*. Now the newly revised second edition goes even further in assisting new special education teachers during that all-important first year. Updated to address changes in NCLB and IDEA legislation, this new edition also features additional strategies and best practices relevant to special education and inclusive classrooms.

The *Exceptional Teacher's Handbook, Second Edition*, provides a step-by-step management approach complete with planning checklists and other ready-to-use forms. Arranged sequentially, the book guides new teachers through the entire school year, from preplanning to post planning.

(From the back cover of the book)

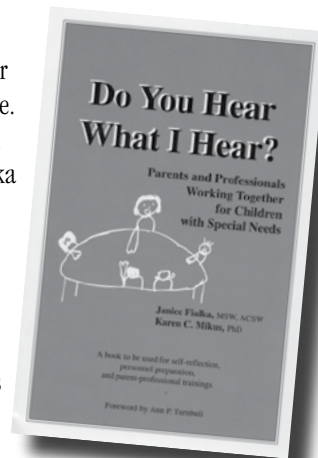
### Do you Hear What I Hear?: Parents and Professionals Working Together for Children with Special Needs

Janice Fialka, MSW, ACSW and Karen C. Mikus, PhD

*Do You Hear What I Hear?* Parents and Professionals Working Together for Children with Special Needs is unique. Cutting through the rhetoric and jargon of the partnership literature, Janice Fialka and Karen Mikus offer us an entirely fresh, dynamic, and interactive way to gain new insights. They have “colored outside the lines” in creating a dialogue that enables us, the readers, to gain insights about the partnership dynamics between parents and professionals. In their unique creation, we learn about the feelings, hopes, fears, uncertainties, and expectations from both parent and professional perspectives. Whether you are a parent, professional, or both, you are in for a treat in not only getting more in touch with your own feelings but with the feelings of your significant partner.

I strongly recommend it to you with every confidence that new insights are here for everyone.

—Ann P Turnbull, Co-Director  
Beach Center for Families and Disability  
University of Kansas



## QUOTE CORNER

*“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved.”*

Hellen Keller





## Communication Between Parents and Resources

*Victoria Toney – Resource Teacher – M.S.D. Lawrence Township Schools – Indianapolis*

*Karen Nicholas – Parent of child - Indian Creek Elementary – M.S.D. Lawrence Township*

Communication plays a huge role between the school and the parents of any child in special education. This is even more important when a transition is taking place with a new school or a new teacher. In order to teach a child successfully, parents and all stakeholders must collaboratively share areas of frustration, strengths, deficits, learning styles, parental concerns, what motivates the child, and the child's interests. Open and ongoing communication between parents and educators are key components to a child's ultimate success in school.

### THE INITIAL MEETING

The initial meeting should have all of the above areas discussed. This will help the Resource Teacher begin to put a plan together for that specific child. The Resource Teacher and parents should once again meet within weeks of school beginning to discuss the plan, make changes if necessary, and put it into place. The IEP should include "the plan" that differentiates the child's education and what "tricks" will be used to meet those goals.

### PARENT'S RESPONSIBILITY

The parent's responsibility at home along with the tutor (if one is part of the family plan) should be part of the discussion so everyone is on the same path. It is very important for the child to know that all stakeholders in his / her education are supporting their education by communicating and working together.

### FINE TUNE THE PLAN

The plan is constantly being "fine tuned" throughout the school year as communication continues to flow through e-mail and meetings pertaining to your child. Frustration between the school and parents is eliminated when you can communicate with a Resource Teacher and they understand your child from the beginning. It's a team approach that has your child's education as a #1 priority. "Tricks" (ways to teach that specific child with their style of learning) that are working should be duplicated at home, during tutoring sessions, and at school through communication between the Resource Teacher and the parents.

Many parents feel frustrated at times, and this can be eliminated by continuing to communicate and work toward what is best for the child. Both parties know the child and can work together to get desired results. If one party feels completely different from the other party there is a communication break down, and that needs to be defined and resolved before you can successfully move forward for the child.

Parent and school communication plays a vital role in a child's success and personal growth. If one party is not communicating the child loses. Effective teamwork and ongoing collaboration will create a foundation that will enable children to achieve their maximum potential.



*(Administrator's Role: continued from page 1)*

## KEY AREAS OF FOCUS IN THE LATEST VERSION OF IDEA INCLUDE:

- Reducing misdiagnosis, particularly of students who are culturally different
- Further strengthening commitment to supported inclusive education
- Increasing the probability of early intervention
- Reducing lawsuits by parents by encouraging mediation
- Acknowledging initial Congressional commitment to pay up to 40% of special education costs (by 2011)
- Increasing qualifications of special education teachers
- Reducing special education paperwork
- Promoting normalization and flexibility in discipline while reaffirming the recognition that some behavior problems are a manifestation of disability
- Giving the Education Secretary more power to hold states accountable
- Alignment with No Child Left Behind
- "Effective transition services to promote successful post-school employment and education"

Excellent summaries and analyses of these and other components of IDEA 2004 are available from the Council for Exceptional Children (<http://www.cec.sped.org/>) and Wrightslaw (<http://wrightslaw.com/>).

The responsibilities of the administrator have been – and remain today – to be the catalyst and facilitator, creating a climate that promotes inclusive education for all students. To comply with IDEA 2004, continue changing what is unjust and protecting what is just.

*(Welcome Back: continued from page 1)*

- I understand the elements of my job description but I know my responsibility for children far exceeds the published document. Therefore, I will not hesitate to step into an administrative vacuum when the instructional or personal welfare of a child is concerned.
- I know that the respect of my co-workers on all levels is important because therein lies my only clout to accomplish what I want. Therefore, I will build a reputation for fairness and integrity.
- I know that some people with whom I work are lonely and heavily burdened and that they may not always communicate wisely. Therefore, when people bare their souls to me I will forever hold their confidence inviolate.
- I know that my time and abilities are limited while the demands upon them are constantly increasing. Therefore, I will delegate.
- I know that when I delegate responsibilities, I also delegate the right to make mistakes. Therefore, I will accept but work to eliminate honest errors of judgment. I will not tolerate mistakes of carelessness and indifference.
- I know there are gargantuan and essential needs for educating all children and that my job is mammoth but I am only part of the universe, not in charge of it. Therefore, I will take neither my job nor myself too seriously.

*Phyllis Land Usher  
Assistant Superintendent  
Indiana Department of Instruction*

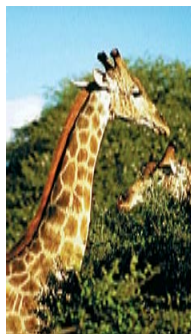
## Indiana DOE Resources NEED HELP? JUST ASK!

### Contact information for the Division of Exceptional Learners:

Indiana Department of Education, Division of Exceptional Learners  
Room 229, State House  
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2798  
Local Telephone: 317/232-0570  
Toll Free: 1-877-851-4106  
Facsimile: 317/232-0589  
[www.doe.state.in.us/exceptional](http://www.doe.state.in.us/exceptional)

**IPLA is utilizing our database more and more to send out information concerning important dates, conferences, and workshops. Do we have your updated email address? Unless you are a current participant, we probably do not.**

Please email Benji Betts at [bbetts@doe.state.in.us](mailto:bbetts@doe.state.in.us) with your current email address.

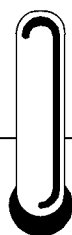


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<b>November 14, 2005</b>	Dr. Tim Rasinski –
	Reading Fluency Instruction
	Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites
	50 Spots available @ \$50 each
	Registration can be found at
	<a href="http://www.doe.state.in.us/ipla">www.doe.state.in.us/ipla</a>

<b>November 14-15, 2005</b>	Groups 41 and 42 Sessions
	Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites

<b>January 23-24, 2006</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> Annual IPLA Winter Conference
	Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel and Suites

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